

VERB.™ IT'S WHAT YOU DO. NATIVE STYLE.

WHAT What does it mean? VERB is an action word like run, bike, dance, swim, sing, and paint. VERB is a multiethnic youth campaign to encourage kids across the nation to find activities they enjoy. Being active and participating in youth programs has many health benefits. Some of these benefits are increased self-esteem, improved motor and social skills, and preventing health problems such as diabetes.

“Native Style”. How do you find a VERB that is *“Native Style”*? The only Native American on the PGA tour, Notah Begay III, found his *“Native Style”* VERB in golf. What VERBs are out there for the Native American youth? How can you help your child to find their VERB *“Native Style”*? Get involved with your kids and encourage them to be active. Take a walk together as a family. Play catch. Throw the Frisbee. Dance at a pow wow. Go to the community center for a game of basketball. Hike. There are endless VERBs to choose from. Find one that you and your kids like to do together.

Encourage your children to get involved in a local community organization such as the Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, the American Soccer League Association, or the Recreation Center basketball league. Adolescence is the time when youth need to develop the attitudes, abilities, values and social skills that will help them in adulthood.¹ Activity occupies time that could be filled by risky behaviors.²

WHY Diabetes is a serious problem among Native Americans. Overall prevalence of Type 2 diabetes in Native Americans is 12.2% vs. 5.2% of the general population. In some tribes, 50% of the population has diabetes according to the 2000 Diabetes Facts and Figures report by the American Diabetes Association. Obesity, diet and regular physical activity can be changed and controlled to prevent or at least delay the onset of diabetes and, once it has set in, to reduce its complications. Adolescence is a critical time to change behaviors relevant to health. Health-related habits, values and lifestyles established during youth are likely to continue throughout life.

Health experts recommend that kids accumulate at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity. Research shows that positive participation in organized activities relates to a lower chance of school dropout and lower rates of substance abuse.³ Compared to typical American youth, young people participating in community-based organization are nearly 20% more likely to rate their chance of graduation from high school as “very high.”⁴ Participation in physical activity can also promote social well-being among youth. Sports and physical activity programs can introduce youth to skills such as teamwork, self-discipline, sportsmanship, leadership and socialization.⁵ Community programs such as peer monitoring, band, drama or a volunteer program, teach skills such as goal setting, decision making, communicating, problem solving, and negotiating conflicts.⁶

WHO The VERB campaign is developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/youthcampaign . The parent site can be found at www.verbparent.com, and for youth information visit www.VERBnow.com .

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¹ Community Programs to Promote Youth Development, National Research Council, Institute of Medicine. Jacquelynne Eccles and Jennifer Appleton Goatman, Editors, 2002

² Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, Carnegie Corporation of New York.

From abridged version of A Matter of Time, 1992.

³ Extracurricular Involvement Matter? Jacquelynne S. Eccles; Bonnie L. Barber; Journal of Adolescent Research, Vol. 14 No. 1, January 1999 10-43.

⁴ National Youth Development Information Center www.nydic.org

Community Counts: How Youth Organizations Matter for Youth Development; Milbrey W. McLaughlin, Professor of Education, Stanford University.

⁵ USDHHS, 2000c.

⁶ A Matter of Time, Risk and Opportunity in the Out-of-School Hours, Recommendation for Strengthening Community Program for Youth, Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, April 1994.